

Montana Department of Military Affairs  
Disaster & Emergency Services Division  
**State Emergency Coordination Center**

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**Situation Report for July 24, 2007** (issued @ 1500 hrs.)

## **07 FIRES**

### **I. Background Information**

Since June, hot and dry weather has dominated the region creating very high to extreme fire conditions. Fire Indices are at an all time high while fuel moistures are low. Accompanying the high indices are weather patterns that have set the conditions for lightning and lightning caused starts. High pressure weather patterns over the region are responsible for the high temperatures and little to no moisture. Occasional cold fronts push through the region causing severe lightning storms that ignite wildfires. Rain has accompanied these fronts but a return to a high pressure system mitigates any moisture that fell. The weather forecast project a continuing of the high pressure systems through August and possible into September.

See [http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/predictive/outlooks/fire\\_behavior/fire\\_behavior.pdf](http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/predictive/outlooks/fire_behavior/fire_behavior.pdf) for Fire Behavior Predictions.

### **II. Current Incident Situation**

#### **Little Wolf, Ahorn, Novak Fires are being managed by Bennett's Type I team**

- **Little Wolf Fire** in the Wolf Creek drainage, 547 acres, reduction in acreage due to more accurate mapping. Lewis and Clark County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has been activated. Little Wolf is 90% contained and is threatening 20 structures. Personnel assigned: 168. Cause: Lightning
- **Ahorn Fire** on the Lewis and Clark National Forest in Lewis and Clark County is at 13,850 acres. 0% Containment. Personnel Assigned: 183. Structures threatened and evacuations in place. Cause: Lightning. The fire continues to move to the east out of the wilderness.
- **Novak**, in Lewis and Clark County in the Lewis and Clark National Forest, is at 1,750 acres. Novak is 0% contained and is threatening 24 structures. Personnel assigned: 81. The fire is causing traffic impacts on I-15. Cause: Lightning

**Fool Creek** on the Lewis and Clark and Flathead National Forests in Lewis and Clark County is at 6,214 acres. Reinarz's Fire Use Management Team. Personnel assigned: 65. Cause: Lightning

**Owl** on Yellowstone NP and Gallatin NF. The Owl Fire is 303 acres, reduction in acreage due to

more accurate mapping. 0% contained. Wilder's Type 2 IMT will be transitioning into command today. The fire is threatening 13 structures. Personnel assigned: 10. Cause: Lightning.

**Pattengail Creek** on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF. 10 miles NE of Wisdom. 4,058 acres and 26% contained. Secrest's Type 2 team will be transitioning to a Type 3 Incident Organization. No structures threatened. Personnel assigned: 101. Cause: Lightning.

**Rugby** on the Lewis and Clark NF is 12 miles west of Neihart. 15 structures are threatened. 210 acres with 0% containment. Angell's T2 IMT. Personnel assigned: 91. Cause: Lightning

**Walk In** on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. 8 miles northwest of Ashland is 105 acres with 80% containment. Personnel assigned: 60. Cause: Lightning

### **NEW LARGE FIRES (Large fires are fires over 100 acres in size)**

**Meriwether** located in the Gates of the Mountains Wilderness is 1,000 acres. 0% containment. Personnel Assigned: 6. Cause: Lightning. Type 4 IC.

**Conger Creek** on the Lolo National Forest, 20 miles north of Ovando. The fire is 350 acres with 0% containment. Structures are threatened. Personnel Assigned: 32. Cause: Lightning

### **III. Weather**

**A Red Flag Warning has been issued for Southeast Montana by the Billings NWS.**

#### **Definitions of a Fire Weather Watch and a Red Flag Warning**

A fire weather watch or red flag warning is issued when the combination of dry fuels and weather conditions support extreme fire danger. These products are written for land and fire managers to highlight the increased fire danger.

A fire weather watch is issued up to 72 hours before the above conditions are expected to occur.

A red flag warning is issued when the conditions above are expected to occur or are occurring within the next 24 hours.

#### **Weather Forecast**

See the Daily Outlook: [http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/predictive/outlooks/daily\\_outlook.pdf](http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/predictive/outlooks/daily_outlook.pdf).

### **IV. State Declarations**

- Statewide Declaration of a Wildland Fire Emergency

### **V. Local and Tribal Declarations**

- **State of Emergency.** The following counties have declared a state of emergency:

Lewis and Clark  
Lake  
Cascade

Ravalli  
Granite  
Missoula

Beaverhead

- **Disaster Declaration.** The following counties have declared a disaster:

Teton

**VI. Requests for State Financial Assistance**

- **N/A**

**VII. Summary of State Resources Committed**

- One Montana Army National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk module is deployed for initial attack. The Blackhawk and its module is staged in Helena.
- One UH-60 Blackhawk and module has been ordered by NRCC for deployment in Missoula for Initial attack starting 7/26/07
- July 20, 2007 at 0700 the SECC was activated and staffed to a Level III status with extended hours (0700-1900) The MT DES staff Duty Officer is available 24 hrs and may be reached at (406) 841-3911.
- The Lewis and Clark County Emergency Operation Center was activated on July 19, 2007.